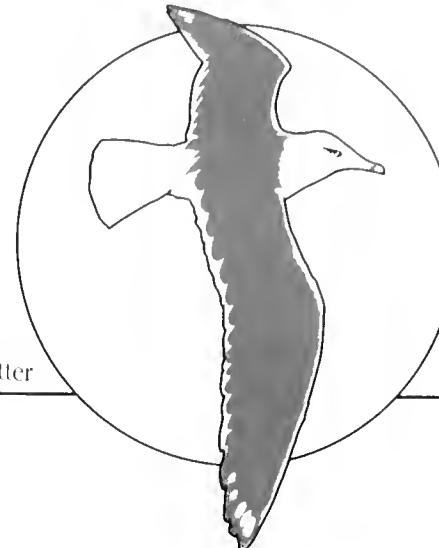


# The Gull



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Golden Gate Audubon Society Newsletter

Volume 85 No. 9 October 2001

## Lessons from Martin Luther King Jr. Wetlands

By Helen Pitt

**B**e silent, be still and listen," Golden Gate Audubon Society's Education Director Amiko Mayeno tells a group of fourth graders from Oakland's E. Morris Cox Elementary School on their first birdwatching field trip.

It's a crisp February morning at Martin Luther King Jr. Regional Shoreline Park and the group of nine- and 10-year-olds is not sure what to expect. As they eagerly close their mouths and open their eyes and ears, there's not a sound but the crunch of old mussel shells underfoot as they walk to the pier to get a closer look at the birds.

For a full ten minutes (an eternity in any fourth grader's book) they are transfixed by the natural scenes around them. The children watch wide-

eyed as Black-necked Stilts, Americans Coots, Mallard Ducks, Red-tailed Hawks and Great Blue Herons gather around them. Even the helicopters buzzing over the wetland enroute to Oakland airport manage to captivate them. One keen observer, nine-year-old Josie Oliver, even notices air bubbles rising up in the water from the cord grass.

Castlemont High School student mentor Kareena La Mar, 15 and heavily pregnant, hands the group several sets of binoculars. Kareena's baby is due that day, but she's not going to let that fact make her miss the field trip.

"I love it, it's a lot of fun watching the kids' faces as they discover the birds," she says.

Kareena, like other Castlemont and Piedmont Millennium High School student mentors, is joining with teachers and parents to help teach East Oakland children about the wildlife that's found virtually on their doorstep. She helps them learn this area is crucial for the survival of the endangered Clapper Rail, as well as a host of native plants.

As soon as the binoculars are out the excitement begins. Anthony Lanzy, 10, spots a Mallard duck wildly flapping its wings. "What's he doing?" he asks his friend Ra'Shawn Murray, 10, who takes a closer peek through binoculars. "Maybe he's trying to smell good for his girl-



Continues on page 6

# Court Victory for GGAS and Alameda County's Measure D

**O**n Monday, August 27, 2001 we won a significant court victory in defending Measure D, the ambitious anti-sprawl measure designed to preserve open space in eastern Alameda County.

Measure D, drafted by the Sierra Club and strongly supported by Golden Gate Audubon, was passed by a 57% vote of the people in November 2000. In that election the Alameda County Board of Supervisors put a far weaker competing measure on the ballot. After a hard fought battle, the Supervisors' weaker measure was thankfully defeated by a wide margin. Golden Gate Audubon's name was used extensively in the successful campaign to pass Measure D. We are told that our name recognition and the public's understanding that we only take on worthy, important issues gave Measure D a great boost in the voting.

Early this year, however, two sets of developers filed suits challenging Measure D's legality on a variety of grounds.

Golden Gate Audubon joined the Sierra Club, the Greenbelt Alliance, and Preserve Area Ridgelands Committee in retaining Earthjustice Legal Defense Fund to represent them as intervenors in defense of Measure D in this litigation.

Once intervention was granted, Earthjustice took a lead role in the defense, getting counsel for the County into meetings with the initiative's authors and helping guide the defense strategy. The County rose to the challenge and joined in vigorously defending the measure.

On August 27 we went to court. Arguments concerning the merits of these challenges were heard by Judge James Richman of the Alameda County Superior Court and from the level of his understanding of the issues it was clear that the judge had carefully read and absorbed the over 500 pages of briefs filed by the parties. At the end of the arguments, Judge Richman ruled from the bench, denying all of the causes of action for which the developers had sought judgment on the merits.

It's a great victory for GGAS and its allies and a very great victory for eastern Alameda County. Our court victory gives us hope that Eastern Alameda County's open spaces and wildlife habitats will be spared from development, at least for now.

Going to court is not fun but it has to be done. We send our thanks to the Earthjustice Legal Defense Fund for their great legal skills and to the Sierra Club for leading the way on this issue. We were happy to join them in this critical fight.

## San Francisco Voters—Please Vote Yes On Proposition D, the Bay Fill Charter Amendment

**P**roposition D on the November ballot in San Francisco will give San Francisco voters the opportunity to say no to any San Francisco agency project that would fill in and destroy 100 acres or more of San Francisco Bay.

San Francisco Bay is the defining feature of our lives in the Bay Area. It provides the physical backdrop for all that we do. It is also an essential feature for the lives of millions of ducks and shorebirds, fish, shellfish and many other wild creatures with whom we share our world.

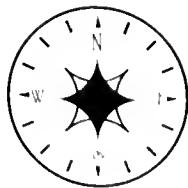
As the Bay is diminished so is the quality of our lives. As the Bay shrinks so does its ability to sustain the immense numbers of wildlife dependent upon it.

Filling the Bay is no small matter. Filling hundreds of acres of the Bay is indeed a huge event that takes its toll on wildlife and on us.

The San Francisco Airport's proposed expansion into the Bay is one example of a large Bay fill project. This runway expansion, as currently proposed, would destroy about a full square mile of the Bay.

Proposition D will give San Francisco voters the opportunity to say yea or nay to this project and to any other project that would, by filling over 100 acres of the Bay, diminish our lives and threaten the lives of the wildlife that depend upon San Francisco Bay for their existence.

We urge you to vote yes on Proposition D.



# Field Trips Calendar

## **Sunday, October 7, STRYBING ARBORETUM**

For details, see November trip. Meet at 8:00 a.m. at the front gate of the Arboretum (9th Ave. and Lincoln Way). Leaders: Allan Ridley and Helen McKenna (415) 566-5241 and Harry Fuller.

## **Wednesday, October 10, EAST BAY SHORELINE**

Meet at 9:30 a.m. in the parking lot of the Seabreeze Market at the intersection of Interstate 80 and University in Berkeley. Heavy rain cancels. Leaders: Anna Wilcox (510) 551-9501 and Jean-Marie Spoelman.

## **Sunday, October 14, ARROWHEAD MARSH Martin Luther King Regional Shoreline.**

Meet at 12:30 pm. Take Hwy 880 to Hegenberger Rd. exit. Drive west to Doolittle and turn right. Turn right on Swan Way. Turn left after a block and take the dirt road to the last parking lot. Many migrant shorebirds; Clapper Rail and Burrowing Owl possible. Leaders: Lillian Fujii and Steve Hayashi (510) 256-4167, steveandlil@worldnet.att.net.

## **Saturday, October 20, FOURTEENTH ANNUAL POINT REYES NATIONAL SEASHORE ALL-DAY BIRDING BLITZ (Joint activity: GGAS & National Park Service.)**

Meet at 8:00 a.m. at Five Brooks

Trailhead parking lot (about 3.5 miles south of Olema on Highway 1). This fast paced multi-habitat trip covers the Five Brooks Pond area, Limantour Spit, Drakes Beach, Chimney Rock and Point Reyes, ending at Bear Valley and producing approximately 100 species. Bring food, water, and layered clothing for variable weather. Leader: Leon Abrams (415) 453-9980 (work), (510) 845-4107 (home). \*

## **Sunday, October 21, CRAB COVE Alameda.**

Meet at 8:30 a.m. at the end of McKay Ave. in Alameda. Take Webster through the Tube. Turn right on Central, 1 block, left on McKay. A leisurely look at the Fall birds of the East Bay shoreline. Beginners welcome on this 3-hour trip. Heavy rain cancels. Leader: Anthony Fisher (510) 658-8769, Loveisant@aol.com.

## **Saturday, November 3, MUDDY HOLLOW, THREE WAYS Point Reyes National Seashore.**

Meet at 9:15 am in the Muddy Hollow Trail parking lot off of Limantour Road. We will make three forays in as many directions for a total of ≈ 4 miles. Take Bear Valley Road, from its intersection with Hwy 1 in Olema, to Limantour Road. Continue on Limantour about 5 miles and turn right into the Muddy Hollow parking area. For car-pooling, meet at the North Berkeley BART lot by 8:00 am. Trip ends at 1:00 pm. Leader: Jeffrey Black (510) 526-7068. \*

## **Sunday, November 4, STRYBING ARBORETUM**

Meet at 8:00 a.m. at the front gate of the Arboretum (9th Ave. and Lincoln Way) for this regular first Sunday of the month half-day trip. The Strybing Arboretum is a delightful section of Golden Gate Park, with several "micro-habitats" attracting a varied array of resident, migrant and vagrant birds. Beginners and all others welcome. Leaders: Allan Ridley and Helen McKenna (415) 566-5241

## **Sunday, November 11, COYOTE HILLS REGIONAL PARK**

Meet at 9:00 a.m. in the first parking lot on the left (beyond the fee booth). From the East Bay take I-880 south to Rt. 84/Dumbarton Bridge exit. Turn right and continue west. Exit on Paseo Padre Pkwy. Turn right and continue north one mile, left on Patterson Ranch Road to Coyote Hills. Bring lunch and liquids. This is a unique park with fresh water and salt pond habitat. We should see ducks, waders and much more. Beginners welcome. Heavy rain cancels. Leader: Peter Allen (415) 892-8063. \$

Trips marked with a (\$) go to parks or other sites which require an entrance fee. Carpooling arrangements will be attempted by leader for trips marked with a (\*).

**Problems, etc.:** If you need information and have difficulty reaching a field trip leader, or **IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO LEAD A TRIP**, call Anthony Fisher, Field Trips Committee Chair, (510) 658-8769 Loveisant@aol.com

## **Get the GULL online**

You can generally get the latest issue of the GULL online before receiving it in the mail. Just go to our Web site anytime before the first of the month and it is generally there where you can read it and if you wish download it and print it. Our Web site address is [www.goldengateaudubon.org](http://www.goldengateaudubon.org); make sure you bookmark this site for easy access.

# **A Final Reminder: GGAS and Mellon Trust Present A Seminar on Socially and Environmentally Conscious Investing**

**I**s it possible to invest in socially and environmentally sound companies and still make a comfortable return? If so, how does one know where to invest?

Mellon Private Asset Management, a division of Mellon Bank, has generously agreed to present a seminar to GGAS members on this issue. Their experts in this field will inform us on the many opportunities that exist for

socially and environmentally conscious investing.

We will have incredible views of the Bay and light refreshments will be served. You will gain valuable insights on how to invest without guilt and you'll have a chance to meet other GGAS members and staff. What more could you ask. See you there.

The seminar will take place on

Friday, October 26, 2001 from 3 PM to 5 PM at the offices of the Mellon Trust of California located at One Embarcadero Center, 22<sup>nd</sup> Floor in San Francisco.

Attendance is free but please RSVP by October 19, 2001 to the GGAS office at 510-843-2222 or by email at [ggas@compuserve.com](mailto:ggas@compuserve.com)

## **November Meetings**

**In San Francisco** the meeting will be held on November 8, at the Randall Museum, and will feature George Raiche: Digiscoping on "Using a Digital Camera and Spotting Scope

Together to Take Pictures".

**In Berkeley** the meeting will be held on November 15 at the Northbrea Community Church, and will feature Eleanor Briccetti on "Birds

of Churchill, Manitoba and the Pribilof Islands of Alaska – A Slide Presentation"

## **Honoring Alan Hopkins**

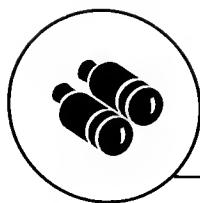
We've received several donations in recognition of Alan Hopkins' wonderful work for GGAS and for our Bay Area wildlife. If you, too, would like to show Alan how much you appreciate his efforts, please feel free to send GGAS a donation in his name. As always, your donation is fully tax deductible. And, as always, your dollars help GGAS fulfill its mission of conserving our Bay Area wildlife resources, providing environmental education to diverse communities, and bringing the joys of birding to as many people as possible.

## **Christmas Bird Count Dates**

Mark your calendars now!

Oakland Christmas Bird Count will be held on Sunday, December 16, 2001. The San Francisco Count will be held Thursday, December 27th.

Details will be in next month's *Gull*.



## Cooper's Hawk

**B**elow our deck is a stand of tall, spindly black oaks. Their bushy heads dance in the breezes at 10 to 20 feet above eye level. All sorts of birds enjoy this vantage point. In winter, the bare branches are perfect perches for flocks of cedar waxwings to catch the rays of the setting sun. Red- and white-breasted nuthatches, chickadees, titmice, acorn, Nuttal's, downy and hairy woodpeckers enjoy perching there before launching themselves toward the feeders along the deck. Flycatchers hunt from their twigs.

Before bounding out of bed, which I never do since I'm not a morning person (except for bird watching), I like to raise the shade and contemplate the bird action at the feeders and in the trees. As luck would have it, a hawk silently and swiftly swooped into one of the smaller oaks. It immediately aligned itself with the next branch, its body absolutely parallel as it remained motionless while it decided to do what I was doing: bird watching.

The hawk was a picture of patience, only moving its head, giving me plenty of time to scope out its markings for identification. Since it was brown, I determined that it was a juvenile. There have been a number of red-shouldered and Cooper's hawks who courted this spring and have nested in the area. Now the young are experiencing "tough love" from their parents and, being hungry, are forced to learn how to hunt.

Their hungry screams are so frequent that you can't help but feel sorry for them—but their parents show no pity. They are learning to make it alone. This is called survival.

Sharp-shinned and Cooper's hawks are so similar that you have to go over a check list of characteristics before jumping to an identification. Usually you don't have much time to study the subject. With lots of experience you just have a gut feeling and use "jizz" to make a call. Jizz, as I've mentioned before, is a distinctive physical "attitude". It is a combination of shape, posture and behavior, not just field identification markings. Jizz is probably what those dedicated souls who count hawks during migration use before they even raise their field glasses.

As I viewed "my" hawk through binoculars I saw a crow-sized brown bird with yellow eyes, a formidable beak, with a brown patterned back and thin, dark streaks on its buffy-white breast. I couldn't see its legs or tail, but when it finally flew I viewed the banded tail which was longish and very rounded when it fanned out in flight. It dropped down from the tree limb before climbing with slow, deep wing beats. As it circled overhead, I came to a conclusion: a juvenile Cooper's hawk. My field guide backed me up.

While reading up on accipiters (Cooper's and sharp-shinned hawks and goshawks), it was said that Cooper's hawks will not tolerate sharp-shinned within their territories.

This stands to reason since they prey upon the same things, mainly birds. However, the larger Cooper's will also take small mammals. These hawks ensure the survival of the fittest as they cull out the sick, the weak, and the slower birds. If birds at your feeders know a hawk is nearby, you will notice them get very quiet as they seek shelter from its gaze.

Accipiters are amazing hunters which use several techniques. They are masters of the sneak attack. Their short, strong wings allow them to weave and dodge through dense cover as they flush out their prey. They might also use a perch from which they choose a meal, diving down with such speed you only see a burst of feathers left in the hawk's wake. They can also chase down other birds in midair, although not with the speed or the grace of a falcon. Strangely, accipiters are quite effective predators on the ground. They will chase rabbits and birds on foot. One account tells of a Cooper's hawk which was found with a broken wing. It was incapable of flight but it was plump and well-fed. Since the wing had healed, although improperly, it must have been taking all its food on foot for many weeks.

I am not alone in my wonder and appreciation of birds of prey. They have inspired many a bird watcher, and even those who rarely notice birds. When in the field or at home, don't forget to look skyward—or in your trees. You could be rewarded.

# A Reminder: GGAS To Offer A Seminar on Socially and Environmentally Conscious Investing

We would all like to receive as large a return as possible from our investments. Is it possible to invest in socially and environmentally sound companies and still make a comfortable return? If so, how does one know where to invest?

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## Lessons from...

*Continued from page 1*

friend," suggests Ra'Shawn. The two boys had seemed a little crestfallen to learn that the female Mallard was not as colorful as her male counterpart. "Maybe he's dry cleaning his fancy clothes to go to a party tonight," says Anthony. As the two boys are engrossed by the Mallards, another group is taking a closer look at the squirrels, while keeping a keen eye for burrowing owls on the land around the marsh area.

Next stop on the field trip involves hunting for trash along the San Leandro Creek. Joe Martinez, ranger with the East Bay Regional Parks, says this helps provide an important environmental lesson. "This helps the kids understand that when they go back to school their trash could end up washed down here if they just throw it on the ground," he says.

At this point, Britney Horton, 10, gives her fellow students a little lesson about the wetlands' namesake Martin Luther King Junior.

"He was a Black American—back when people was prejudiced—who wanted to go preaching all around the country, but one day when he walked up to preach somebody shot

him," she said. "That's why this park is named after him so we'll remember him."

The group then takes a closer look at the mud that makes up the wetlands, with Golden Gate Audubon's naturalist Tsahai Codner. "This mud is like McDonald's for birds it is so full of things for them to eat," she explains. The children's eyes light up at the prospect of getting their hands dirtied with mud. Ra'Shawn has mud up to his elbows as he digs deep looking for clams, worms or amphipods. His smile is about as wide as the Bay Bridge.

Josh Goldstein, a 16-year-old mentor from Piedmont Millennium High helping out at the mud station, says he loves helping to lead the field trips. "I learn something different from the kids every time I come here," he says.

The Martin Luther King Junior wetlands education project, which began in 1999, aims to promote the wetlands as an integral part of the East Oakland community. To help make the environmental education relevant to the local community, Golden Gate Audubon Society Education Director Amiko Mayeno carried out a "needs assessment" of this group. The study found the East Oakland school community is

extremely diverse; the population is 51 percent African American, 42 percent Hispanic, 5 percent Asian and 2 percent White. It found that East Oakland children had had little exposure to the environment other than nature programs they had seen on television.

"Most of the students thought that being an endangered animal meant that the animals were dangerous," Mayeno said. Most groups, like Miss Elizabeth Quinn's fourth graders, learn a lot more than just the difference between an endangered species and a dangerous one. Before they left for lunch, this group of fourth graders sat down for some quiet time to reflect on what they had learned and what had been the favorite part of their field trip.

Anthony's favorite part of the day was watching the birds. Britney liked picking up trash the best. Ra'Shawn liked digging into the mud and getting his hands dirty. They had been still, silent, listened and watched the birds fly by and it had been fun.

Thanks to this program, the Golden Gate Audubon Society is helping the East Bay community learn that beauty exists not only in a wetland, but also in the smiles of the Oakland children discovering it for the first time.

# News from Audubon Canyon Ranch

—From Betsy Stafford

The serene summer calm that has descended upon our three preserves belies the hubbub that characterized our spring and summer public seasons. Gone for now are the Golden Eagle (came twice in April), the 2,000 schoolchildren (taught by our 160 docents), the approximately 100 fledglings from our Bolinas Lagoon heronry (Great Blues, Great Egrets and Snowies), and the 6,056 public visitors to our Bolinas Lagoon Preserve (welcomed by our Ranch Guides and you, our wonderful host volunteers.)

Still hanging around (in mid-August) are a few ravens (laid back after feeding their brood with chicks from 12-20 egret nests) and one out-of-sync heron nest with 2 "teenage" chicks (it's a mystery why the 2 adults started their nest 4 months later than normal). The buckeyes at Bouverie and Bolinas Preserves are festooned with their bulbous fruits, and the grasses are heavy with food for the field mice and sneezes for the allergic. The Pileated Woodpeckers are satiated with ripe grapes. In short, it's late summer (or what our biologists call our northern Californian coastal "fall").

Soon to come, however:

## At Bolinas Lagoon Preserve

Public Work Day – Saturday, November 3, 9:30am. Please join our knowledgeable staff to help with projects around our lovely Volunteer Canyon. A hearty free lunch if you call ahead to say you're coming, 415/868-9244.

## At Bouverie Preserve

Public Work Day – October 6, 9:30-1:00. Come to help with various jobs, inside and out, and feast on a free lunch. Call 707/938-4554 so that we can plan on enough food.

Docent Training – Wednesdays from September 12 – February 20. Call 707/938-4554 for information on this award-winning natural-history program that prepares volunteers to share their love of nature with 3rd and 4th graders.

Guided Public Walks through our beautiful preserve in Sonoma's Valley of the Moon – September 15, October 13, November 3, December 1. Availability is by a lottery drawing; to sign up, please send a self-addressed stamped envelope to Bouverie Preserve, PO Box 1195, Glen Ellen 95442.

Resource Management Days – on Mondays, 8:15 – 12:30, September 24, October 29, November 12. Work with our talented Land Steward, John Martin, on outdoor management projects. Please call the Bouverie office.

### Cypress Grove Preserve

We invite all experienced shorebird observers to join our Research Center's annual Fall, Winter, and Spring Shorebird Censuses on Tomales Bay. We also will conduct a Waterbird Survey this winter. Please contact Katie Etienne or John Kelly at 415/663-8205 or <cgp@svn.net>. We depend upon the skill and generosity of you, our local experts, for these and other ACR research projects.

## Donations

### Golden Eagle (\$1,000 or more)

Celia J Watkins

### Least Tern (\$200 or more)

Anonymous donation in honor of Alan Hopkins for his mission to Save the Quail, Joyce and James Schnobrich, Stefanie Arthur

### Clapper Rail (\$100 or more)

Marilyn and Nasatir Ttee, Virginia and George Bing, Richard Gale

### Gifts (to \$99)

Christine Colasurdo, Todd Smith, Mary L. Turner, Courtenay Peddle, Margaret and Norman Frank, Julia and Dean Mayberry, J Whitley, Catherine Purchis, Janette and John Dang, in honor of Alan Hopkins

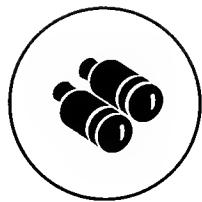
### In Memorium

Arthur N. Michel in memory of **Ella Rezac Michel**, Susan and Carl Landauer in memory of **Mrs. Joseph Lanum**, Carolyn Kolka in memory of **Helmut Ehrenspeck**

### Thanks, also to

Elizabeth Jones for donating a scope to be used in GGAS educational programs for children.

A bequest to the Golden Gate Audubon Society helps make it possible for us to continue the good work we do in helping to preserve our natural world for future generations. If you are interested in setting up a bequest we have a team of experts who will be glad to help you. Please call Arthur Feinstein at our GGAS Office for more information. Our phone number is 510-843-2222. Thanks.



# Observations

July 29-August 29, 2001

By Collin G. Murphy, Ph.D.

The end of August brought an abundance of fall migrants to N. California, especially notable along our shores, where thousands of shorebirds reappeared, including some nice finds such as 400 Red Knots at the Hayward Regional Shoreline. Away from shore, several Willow Flycatchers, a few Ruby-crowned Kinglets, and Cedar Waxwing flocks returned to their winter haunts. Seven review species were reported, all pelagics or shorebirds.

## Albatross to Ducks.

A Salvin's type **Shy Albatross** (*Thalassarche cauta*) was reported at the Cordell Banks, SON, Jul. 27 but could not be found again on a PT the following day (fide DLSh). Black-footed Albatross were sighted on several PTs, with 100 on a Cordell Banks PT, SON, Jul. 28 (DLSh), 30 on an Aug. 8 Moss Landing-MTY Bay PT, MTY (DLSh), 29 on MTY Bay whale watch Aug. 19 (SR), 11 on an Aug. 10 MTY PT (DLSh), and 20 on a Cordell Banks PT, SON, Jul. 20 (DLSh). A Northern Fulmar was seen off Pigeon Point, SM, Jul. 28 (RSTh). A **Dark-rumped Petrel** (*Pterodroma phaeopygia*) was identified on a Ft. Bragg, MEN, PT, Aug. 18 (SHo, DR, MOB). This species, also known as the Hawaiian Petrel, is a bird of the tropical Pacific, with subspecies breeding on Haleakala Crater, HI and on the Galapagos (Harrison, 1985), and there are several recent CA records.

High counts for Pink-footed Shearwaters were 90 on a Cordell Banks PT, SON, Jul. 20 (DLSh), with 75 in the same area, Jul. 28 (DLSh), and 50 or more on a Farallon, SF, PT Aug. 20 (ASH). A single Flesh-footed Shearwater was on the aforementioned Jul. 20 Cordell Banks PT (DLSh). Individual Wilson's Storm-Petrels were observed on each of two trips to the Cordell Banks, one in

SON waters Jul. 28 (DLSh), and the other in MRN county waters Aug. 26 (RS). Encouraging for continued Brown Pelican recovery prospects was a report of 1000 birds fishing on Elkhorn Slough, MTY, Aug. 22 (JDLT).

Two nice groups of Wood Ducks were found, with 25 at Shadow Cliffs RP, ALA, Aug. 5 (KR), and 26 at Almaden Reservoir, SCL, Aug. 23 (AV). A male Blue-winged Teal stayed at San Lorenzo Park pond, SCZ, all summer, a county record (DB, fide DSu). Two Harlequin Ducks were near the mouth of Virgin Creek, MEN, Aug. 18 (DR). One Long-tailed Duck continued at Albany, ALA, waterfront, Aug. 15-23 (BF), and an out-of-season Common Goldeneye was seen at San Luis State Recreation Area, MER, Aug. 2 (PJM). One Hooded Merganser was spotted near Hwy 101, Corte Madera, MRN, Aug. 15 (RL).

## Raptors to Alcids.

An immature Broad-winged Hawk was at Shadow Lake, LAS, Aug. 19 (DM) and the first Broad-wing for the season flew over Hawk Hill, MRN, Aug. 27 (TB). A Swainson's Hawk was spotted over Harkins Slough, MTY, Aug. 14 (JP). Unusual on the coast in August was a Prairie Falcon at the Marin Headlands, MRN, Aug. 21 (TB). Four Gambel's Quail were at Oasis Ranch, MON, Aug. 16, along with a possible California-Gambel's Quail hybrid (PJM). Pacific Golden-Plover sightings picked up during the period, with single birds found near Bodega Bay, SON, Jul. 31 (DA), in Menlo Park, SM, Aug. 5 (RSTh), in Schollenberger Park, SON, Aug. 19 (DS), at Hayward Regional Shoreline, ALA, Aug. 25 (JR), on Moro Cojo Slough, MTY, Aug. 27 (RFou), and two birds west of Abbott's Lagoon, PRNS, MRN, Aug. 14-24 (DSt, LC, TBr).

A probable **Common Ringed Plover** (*Charadrius hiaticula*) was briefly observed at Loleta, HUM, Aug.

20 (KI). This Arctic species is difficult to distinguish in the field from the Semipalmated Plover (*Charadrius semipalmatus*), and it is hoped that the observation is submitted to the CBRC for review. A much better look was had of a **Common Greenshank** (*Tringa nebularia*), a bird of Western Alaska. This extreme rarity was seen Aug. 27 through at least Aug. 29 at the mouth of the Mad River, McKinleyville, HUM (KI, TL, SM, GL, MOB). Conveniently, it was among a group of birds made up of its sibling species, Greater Yellowlegs (*Tringa melanoleuca*) and Lesser Yellowlegs, (*Tringa flavipes*), from which it is distinguished by having greenish legs and an entirely white rump (Sibley, 2000). This sighting appears to be a first California record, and at press time, hoards of birders from other parts of the state were headed for HUM county.

A Whimbrel at Clear Lake SP, LAK, Aug. 5 was a 2<sup>nd</sup> county record (DW), and a Ruddy Turnstone at Clear Lake SP, LAK, Aug. 12, was a 1<sup>st</sup> county record (JW, DW, BW). Unusual were hundreds of Red Knots visiting Hayward Regional Shoreline, ALA, Aug. 23 (BR). The Winter, 2001 issue of *Bird Trends* (Canadian Wildlife Service) gave estimates of the total population numbers for over 50 North American Shorebirds. Red Knots number approximately 400K. For those sandpiper species occurring irregularly in Northern CA, population estimates for the entire continent are as follows: Semipalmated Sandpiper, 3.5M (the most abundant for any of the species listed); Pectoral, 440K; Baird's 300K; Stilt, 200 K; Solitary 25K; and Buff-breasted 15K. Interestingly, the numbers reported in Northern CA for the current period fall in somewhat the same order, with the highest counts for Bairds, Pectoral and Semipalmated, in that order, and the lowest numbers for Stilt, Solitary and

## Buff-breasted Sandpipers.

Specifically, there were 8 individual Semipalmated Sandpipers: One at Ano Nuevo State Reserve, SM, Aug. 4 (JMo), at Harkins Slough, MTY, Aug. 15–20 (SR, CK, RW, MOB), at Abbott's Lagoon, PRNS, MRN, Aug. 18–24 (SD, KB, TBr), in MON county, Aug. 15 (PJM), near Black Butte Reservoir, TEH, Aug. 14 (DR, RC), at Kelsey Creek, Clear Lake SP, LAK, Aug. 24, a 3<sup>rd</sup> county record (JW), at Redwood shores Sewage Treatment plant, SM, Aug. 19 (RSTh), and at the Davis Wetlands, YOL, Aug. 23 (SH). Thirty-seven Baird's Sandpipers were identified over HUM, MRN, MTY, SM, SCL, SCZ, SON, and TRI, counties, while 16 Pectoral Sandpipers were found over MRN, MTY, SM, and SON counties, with the most, 2–4 juveniles at Harkin's slough, MTY, Aug. 24–29 (RFo, RW, BA). A Stilt Sandpiper was at the pond at State and Spreckels, Alviso, SCL, Aug. 18–29 (MM, MR, FV, MOB), another at CCFS, SCL, Aug. 20 (ChW, CW), may have been the same individual, another was reported in MON county, Aug. 15 (PJM), and yet another report came from Palo Alto Baylands Preserve, SCL, Aug. 16 (JWa). A Buff-breasted Sandpiper was seen at Loleta, HUM, Aug. 25 (MF). Three Solitary Sandpipers were reported, one in MON county, Aug. 15 (PJM), and 2 at Topaz Lake, MON, Aug. 16 (PJM). To round out the shorebirds, two Ruffs were identified: one at the pond at State and Spreckels, Alviso, SCL, Aug. 19–29 (MM, FV, MR, MOB), and the other at the Carmel R. mouth, MTY, Aug. 22–23 (BH, RFo, BM). By far the most unusual Sandpiper was an **Upland Sandpiper** (*Bartramia longicauda*) found on the Farallones, SF, Aug. 25–27 (PRBO). This species, which looks more like a curlew, is rarely seen west of the Rockies, and most California records are from the Farallones (Small, 1994).

Thirty-three and 20 Long-tailed

## Wood Warbler Sightings

### Nashville Warbler

Aug. 15	Lassen NP, TEH	DR, RC
Aug. 16–20 (1–3)	Eureka, HUM	TL
Aug. 19	Ida Clayton Rd., SON	DS
Aug. 28–29	Natural Bridges SP, SCZ	LG, WG, JM

### Virginia's Warbler

Aug. 27–29	Natural Bridges SP, SCZ	LG, WG, TN, MOB
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### Northern Parula

Jun. 30–	Harding Park, SF	RF, KR, ME
Aug. 3(1–2)		
Aug. 10–25	Pescadero Creek, SM	RSTh
Aug. 21–25	Natural Bridges SP, SCZ	JD, AK
Aug. 27	Pine Lake, SF	DM

### Chestnut-sided Warbler

Aug. 15	Mt. Davidson, SF	PS
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### Black-and-White Warbler

Jul. 29	Pacifica, SM	DSi
Aug. 20	Soquel Creek, SCZ	DSu.

### American Redstart

Aug. 19	AMSP, MTY	JS
Aug. 20	Neary Lagoon, MTY	BA
Aug. 25	Presidio, SF	ASH
Aug. 25	Pescadero, SM	RSTh
Aug. 26	Rodman Slough, LAK	JW

**Abbreviations for Observers:** BA, Brian Acord, JA, Josh Adams; DA, Dick Ashford; TB, Tim Behr; DB, Dave Bockman; MB, Marj Bouret; TBr, Tony Briggs; KB, Ken Burton; RC, Rita Carratello; TC, Terry Colborn; LC, Laurie Conrad; IIC, Hugh Cotter; SD, Steven Davies; JD, Jeff Davis; JDIT, Jeana De La Torre; ME, Mark Eaton; EE, Elias Elias; MF, Mike Feighner; RF, Rich Ferrick; BF, Brian Fitch; TF, Ted Floyd; RFo, Rick Fournier; RFo, Rob Fowler; SGa, Steve Gerstle; LG, Lois Goldfrank; WG, Wally Goldfrank; SH, Steve Hampton; GH, George Hathaway; LH, Laird Henkel; BH, Bill Hill; ASH, Alan S. Hopkins; SHo, Steve Howell; KI, Ken Irwin; CK, Clay Kempf; AK, Anna Kopitov; JL, Jerry Langham; RL, Rick Lebadour; GL, Gary Lester; TL, Tom Leskiw; MM, Mike Mammoser; MOB, Many Observers; BM, Blake Masten; SM, Sean McCallister; PJM, Peter J.Metropulos; JM, John Meyer; JMo, Joe Morlan; DM, Dan Murphy; DN, Dan Nelson; HN, Hannah Nevins; TN, Todd Newberry; BO, Brit O'Brien; MP, Mark Paxton; PRBO, Point Reyes Bird Observatory; JP, Jeff Poklen; SRA, Sam Rawlins; BR, Bob Richmond; DR, Don Roberson; KR, Kathy Robertson; DaR, Dan Rogers; MR, Mike Rogers; KeR, Kerry Ross; SR, Steve Rovell; JR, Jennifer Rycenga; PS, Paul Saraceni JS, Jason Scott; DS, Doug Shaw; DLSH, Debra Love Shearwater; DSi, Dan Singer; MS, Madeline Spencer; RS, Rich Stallcup; DSi, Dan Stovall; DSu, David Suddjian; RSTh, Ron S.Thorn, JT, Jim Tietz; FV, Frank Vanslager; AV, Ann Verdi; JW, Jeff Wahl; JW, Jerry White; ChW, Chris Wolfe; CW, Claire Wolfe; RW, Roger Wolfe; DW, Dave Woodward; BW, Brian Woodward.

**Abbreviations for Counties and Others:** ALA, Alameda; AMSP, Andrew Molera State Park; ABB, Arcata Bird Box; CC, Contra Costa; CCFS, Coyote Creek Field Station; HUM, Humboldt; LAK, Lake; LAS, Lassen; MRN, Marin; MEN, Mendocino; MER, Merced; MON, Mono; MTY, Monterey; NP, National Park; PT, Pelagic Trip; PRNS, Point Reyes National Seashore; RP, Regional Park; SBT, San Benito SF, San Francisco; SM, San Mateo; SCL, Santa Clara; SCZ, Santa Cruz; SOL, Solano; SON, Sonoma; TEH, Tehama; TRI, Trinity YOL, Yolo.

Jaegers were spotted on the Jul. 20 and 28 Cordell Banks PTs, SON, respectively (DLSH). A Franklin's Gull was at the Big Sur R. mouth Aug. 2, MTY (GH), and a second of that species was found at McKinleyville, HUM, Aug. 14 (KeR). A large flock of Sabine's Gulls, unusual to find so near to shore, contained 55 birds at Ocean Beach, SF, Aug. 27 (ME, SGe). One hundred and twenty Least Terns were in Mountain View, SCL, Jul. 29 (MM), and 98 of them were counted at a salt pond near Crittenden Marsh, SCL, Aug. 1 (MR). A **Sooty Tern** (*Sterna fuscata*) identified on the Aug. 26 Cordell Banks PT, MRN) was a 1<sup>st</sup> county record as well as a 1<sup>st</sup>

Northern CA record (RS). This pelagic tern is found in subtropical oceans around the globe, occasionally along the Gulf Coast of the U.S., and is rarely seen on land except to breed (Harrison, 1985). Black Skimmers continue their expansion, with at least 28 birds over ALA, MRN, SM, SCL, and SOL counties.

A probable juvenile **Long-billed Murrelet** (*Brachyramphus perdix*) was reported off Rio del Mar, near Aptos Creek, SCZ, Aug. 22 (LH, JA, HN). There are very few Northern California records of this Siberian species, a recent split from the

Continues on page 10

## Observation...

*Continued from page 9*

Marbled Murrelet (Sibley, 2000). Amazingly, there were two other reports of this species within the period, the first by murrelet researchers offshore of Northwestern CA early in August (BO, ABB), and the second on Aug. 28, 1600 meters offshore of the Little River mouth, HUM (EE).

### Doves to Grackles.

A White-winged Dove flew near the PRNS, MRN, Lighthouse, Jul. 28 (TF). A young Yellow-billed Cuckoo was spotted in a private yard in Davis, YOL, Jul. 29 (TC). Rare in the eastern portion of SON county was a vocalizing Common Nighthawk on Ida Clayton Rd., SON, Aug. 26 (DS). A

Black-chinned Hummingbird was identified at a private feeder in Lafayette, CC, Aug. 16 (JT), and a Costa's Hummingbird was found in Capitola, SCZ, Aug. 22 (DSu). Unusual for Tilden RP, CC, were two Lewis's Woodpeckers and an Acorn Woodpecker at the top of Mt. Vollmer Aug. 28 (BF). A Least Flycatchers was observed in north Davis, YOL, Aug. 23 (SH). An Eastern Kingbird was at Soap Lake, SBT, Aug. 27 (MP). The Scissor-tailed Flycatcher first reported Jul. 17 remained at Long Marine Lab, SCZ, until at least Aug. 27 (DSu, MS, MB, MOB). A Red-eyed Vireo was found at AMSP, MTY, Aug. 12 (JL), and another was at the Soquel Demonstration Forest, SCZ, Aug. 29 (DSu). Migrant Wood Warblers are trickling in slowly, and a Northern Waterthrush was a 2<sup>nd</sup> LAK county record (see Chart).

A Summer Tanager was along the Guadalupe River, near Trimble Rd., SCL Aug. 25 (MR, MM). A Golden-crowned Sparrow that summered at the Coyote Point Museum, SM, was still present on Aug. 19 (RSTh). Three sightings of Rose-breasted Grosbeaks were reported: at Aptos, SCZ, Aug. 24 (DR), at East Wash, SF, Aug. 26-27 (RF, HC), and at Mt. Davidson, SF, Aug. 29 (PS). Two Blue Grosbeaks visited the San Luis State Recreation Area, MER, Aug. 2 (PJM), and two others were at the Salmon Viewing area, Red Bluff, TEH, Aug. 15 (DR, RC). In Great-tailed Grackle news, 11 birds including young were at Yosemite Lake, MER, Aug. 2 (PJM), breeding was confirmed at Petaluma, SON, Aug. 9-15 (DN, RL, DS, MOB), a 1st county record for both sighting and breeding (fide MF).

## GGAS Volunteers Inspire 2,400 students to become Environmental Stewards

—By Tsahai Codner and Amiko Mayeno

**D**uring the 2000-2001 school year, community volunteers participated as environmental educators or high school mentors in the Golden Gate Audubon Society's environmental education program. Because of their participation, the Golden Gate Audubon Society was able to reach approximately 2,400 students in both Alameda and Oakland elementary schools in this year alone. None of this would have been possible without these dedicated and hard working community members.

Thanks to these individuals desire to improve their community, a greater appreciation for our natural world has been created, the ever widening educational gap between low income and high income communities, is being bridged, and new friendships between various ethnic

and cultural groups have been forged.

A special thank you to Kay Bloom for giving so much of your time. Her kind and gentle spirit has inspired us all. Our rookie of the year, Chris Weidler has often gone above and beyond the call of duty for the program. She volunteered for the program while juggling both school and work.

The GGAS environmental educators knew that their work was making an impact in the lives of the young people they served. This is why they taught with such zeal. They are a capable, resourceful, responsible, and hard working group of people. So, on behalf of the students, teachers, parents, community and the Golden Gate Audubon Society we extend a heart felt, thank you.

### Adult Volunteers Environmental Educators:

Kay Bloom, Mike Bonillas, Howard Brownson, Tim Cleary, Leslie Dinkin, Leora Feeney, Pat Gannon, Corrina Gould, Rebecca Holder, Cathy Hubbard, John Luther, Audre Newman, Mike Richter, Maria Steinman, Chris Weidler

The GGAS was blessed with extremely hard working and caring high school student mentors. Teachers often commented that the high school mentors had been a wonderful and important component of the program. A special thanks to Shameka Bryrd (Castlemont H.S), Josh Goldstein (Millennium H.S) and April Iligan (Encinal H.S) who won the award for donating the most hours.

*Continues on page 11*

# Golden Gate Audubon Fights to Save Alameda Wildlife Habitat

In last November's election, Alameda County voters overwhelmingly passed Proposition D. This is a measure that protects the remaining open spaces of eastern Alameda County through the establishment of urban limit lines.

Golden Gate Audubon played an important role in that successful effort. We supported the Proposition and the use of our name gave it great credibility.

Naturally, developers are frustrated by this Measure and several have decided to challenge it in court by suing Alameda County. Golden Gate

Audubon, along with the Sierra Club (the lead environmental group on this issue) and the Preserve Area Ridgelines Committee (PARC), are taking part in this litigation as Intervenors, i.e., active parties to the litigation even though not part of the original lawsuit. The Earthjustice Legal Defense Fund is acting as the lawyers for GGAS, PARC and the Sierra Club.

Litigation is not what we want to do, but it is too often what we must do if we are to preserve our natural world.

Eastern Alameda County provides

habitat for the Alameda Whipsnake, the Kit fox and many other species listed on state and federal endangered species lists.

If you have never taken our Mines Road field trip, do yourself a favor next year and go. You'll see Roadrunner, Phainopepla, Lewis Woodpecker, Orioles, Lazuli bunting, Rufous-crowned Sparrows, Lawrence Goldfinch and many more, plus incredible wildflower displays.

Eastern Alameda County is a resource that must be protected. We are doing our utmost to do so.

## October Meetings... *Continued from page 12*

Oakland Museum. Recordings in the library include insects, amphibians, reptiles, birds, mammals, environmental sounds and natural sound ambiances from a variety of habitats

On October 18 the meeting will be at the Oakland Museum, (510) - 238-7482 from 7:00 to 9:00 p.m. While the museum closes at 5:00 p.m, security will be there to let people in at the 10th street entrance rather than entrance on Oak Street. We will be in the Lecture Hall on the first floor.

Getting to the Museum by BART is very easy, too. Bill Young and Paul Matzner of the NSS will talk about Bird-Song Identification, Recording, and Cataloging. They will also talk about sound recording they have just completed of the Least Tern at the Alameda Naval Air Station.

This event is open to all and there is no limit to the number of people who may attend.

### **Castlemont High School Mentors:**

Shameka Byrd, Lakeesha Calhoun, Hua Cheng, Maria Diaz, Kareena Lamar, Euniece Law, Hieu Le, Eownna Martin, Yhameilah Muhyee, Bao Phan, Aida Villa, Tylisha Watt, Nikiya Young, Erika Zepeda

### **Millennium High School Mentors:**

Denise de Carion, Bridget Farinha, Josh Goldstein, Noah Gresham Lancaster, Marie Lopez, Josh Owings, Kristina Patel, Aaron Strong, Maurice Trudell

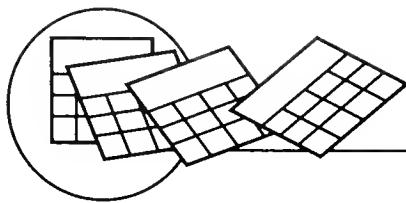
### **Encinal High School Mentors:**

Jesse Acosta, Ryan Agabao, Donna Anderson, Jonathon Anderson, Rahwa Bahta, April Balaria, Syreeta Bautista, Jason Biggs, Amy Bull, Nalley Chaparro, Jamaal Cherry, Kadyzshea Cintron, Justine Cohen, Mary Costales, Chris Davis, Brandon Del Rosario, Danny Delmore, Dillon Delos Reyes, Melissa Estrada, Monique Figueroa, Natalie Figueroa, Damion Floyd, Randy Garchar, Joseph Garfield, Joel Gonzalez, Dante

Henderson, Mechelle Hickey, Chris Hukill, Michelle Hunt, April Iligan, Hallard Jackson, Shedell Lawson, Hang Le, Kenny Le, Kenneth Lee, Kerry Ly, Lorenz Magno, Becky McMahon, Moses Mejia, Rache Moss, Angel Nguyen, Kathy Nguyen, Teena Nguyen, Noemi Orona, Amy Ponce, Chris Robinson, Nahid Safi, Noelle Samuels, Nick San Pedro, Risha Sanchez, Jessica Schapell, Eugene Smith, Manuel Sosa, William Stewart, Jon Stuart, Aaron Tam, Jeffrey Thompson, Lulu Tsehai, Linh Vu, Wendy Wong, Vivian Zuranich

The GGAS also, thanks the high school teachers and administrators who aided in recruiting and scheduling the high school mentors. They've often given up much of their personal time to insure their students' success in the program.

Cara Grimes, Castlemont High School  
Eric Edgerly, Castlemont High School  
Clark Smith, Millennium High School  
Dan Horowitz, Encinal High School



# October Meetings

## **Bats! In Muir Woods!** **Thursday, October 11th, Muir Woods**

Imagine walking through Muir Woods at night. Will it be spooky? Or will it be full of wonderful sights and sounds? The woods are seldom open to visitors after dusk, so here's your chance to find out first hand what it's like. For birders and nature lovers alike, October 11 from 7:00 to 9:00 p.m. will be a special opportunity to learn more about the bats and night life of the creatures of Muir Woods.

Join bat researcher Paul Heady and naturalist Mia Monroe for an evening visit to Muir Woods. For this event we will have to limit the group size to 35. Please call the GGAS office (510) 843-2222 to sign up. We will need your name, phone number, email (if you have one), and the number of people in your party. We encourage car-pooling and will try to assist, so tell us if you could be a driver or if you need a ride. Participants will be asked to bring a flashlight and dress appropriately for cold or damp weather.

## **Birdsong! At Oakland Museum!** **Thursday, October 18th, Oakland Museum**

Nature Sounds Society: Bird-Song Identification, Recording, and Cataloging

**The Nature Sounds Society (NSS)** is a worldwide organization whose principal purpose is to encourage the preservation, appreciation and creative use of natural sounds. The Society promotes education on the technological, scientific and aesthetic aspects of nature sounds through its programs and a diverse network of contacts.

The organization is composed of biologists, museum professionals, conservationists, sound designers, musicians, artists and radio broadcast specialists concerned with ambient natural sound.

**The California Library of Natural Sounds (CLNS)**, located at The Oakland Museum of California, is a comprehensive regional collection of nature sounds, with a particular emphasis on California species and environments. It is located in the Natural Sciences Department of the

*Continues on page 11*

## **WELCOME NEW MEMBERS**

As a member of National Audubon Society, you are automatically enrolled in the local chapter, Golden Gate Audubon Society. Chapter benefits include receipt of *The Gull*, access to field trips and programs, and the opportunity to volunteer. Call the office if you have any questions.

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